How to / Trackmania / Manialink / Building a Maniapage

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Introduction

With the Forever Addon, the structure of ManiaLinks has basically changed compared to TMU.
Because of the new possibilities, the old narrow borders are broken up and you have much more flexibility in designing. Task of this tutorial is to explain you these new possibilities, so that you will be able to create a new Forever ManiaLink for your own.

The tutorial will start with a bit theory: Needed basic knowledge about the positioning of elements. After this, you will find in the second post a detailled description to each of the elements, including some examples. Finally I will mention some interesting aspects and give you a more complex example of a full (small) ManiaLink.
You can roughly say: There is no <line> and <cell> any longer, they are replaced by <quad>, <label> and <frame> which you can place whereever you want. But more about that later.

By the way: All old ManiaLinks created in TMU work in TMF, so don't panic. It is your part to decide, whether use the new ManiaLinks or stay at the old syntax.

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What will not be explained in this tutorial

The basical creation of a ManiaLink-File

I will not describe, how to create a ManiaLink file and how to register it. Nothing changed in comparison to TMU, except the new PlayerPage, so you can look on other tutorials instead.

ManiaLinks for servers

I will limit this tutorial to the ManiaLinks shown in the TMF Explorer. Special things in relation to Server ManiaLinks will not be mentioned.

The new PlayerPage

TrackMania Forever has a new PlayerPage: **http://official.trackmania.com/tmf-playerpage**
Neither the page itself nor the way of registering a code has changed, except the new URL.
The old TMU PlayerPage has already been shut down, and you will not be able to use registered codes in TMU. In the end phase of the beta all codes has been transmitted to TMF, so that all old ManiaLinks are available.

United vs. Nations: Differences between the game versions

TMUF as a paid game offers the complete use of the ManiaLink features, as they are known from TMU.
But TMNF as the free Forever version has some limitations you should know:

No registered ManiaLinks

TMNF players are neither able to register own ManiaLinks, nor to access other registered ManiaLinks. The ManiaLinks can only be visited by entering the complete URL of the XML-file. To make your ManiaLink fully compatible to TMNF, all links have to be done over the URLs.
By the way: There is no Explorer menu entry in TMNF. You can open the Explorer by moving the mouse to the top border of the screen and by clicking the left icon ;)

No ManiaCodes

TMNF players do not have the ability to use any ManiaCodes: The direct input of the URL was already denied in TMU, and access via registered codes is not supported, as said before. This means, that TMNF players cannot download any content from the ManiaLinks, even if it would be free (TMNF players have no Coppers). To say it directly: You can only stare on the ManiaLinks in TMNF ^^

Green is the world

In the ManiaLinks, you can directly use the menu textures from the game (via styles, see below). Because the menus in TMNF are nearly all green, the styles of the ManiaLinks are green, too, whereas in TMUF they have different colors. But this limitation is a very small one in comparison to the others.
Notice: If you log in into TMNF with a TMUF account, you only have the third (small) limitation. The first two points are always related to the account type, and not to the game version.
The functionality of the elements is not affected by the game: TMNF players can use all the features of Entries and FileEntries and so on ;)

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